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ABSTRACT

This issue of a newsletter on adult literacy and learning disabilities focuses on self-esteem. Contributors include a professional in learning disabilities, an adult basic educator, a state literacy resource provider, and two adult students who tell how they overcame struggles with low self-esteem to confront their literacy difficulties and learning disabilities. The following articles are included: "How Not to Feel Stupid When You Know You're Not: Self-Esteem and Learning Disabilities" (Sally L. Smith); "Breaking the Low Self-Esteem Cycle" (Judy-Arin Krupp); "Stacking the Deck: Four Aces of Self-Esteem" (Linda Andresen); "Anger and Frustration: Manifestations of Low Self-Esteem" (Cheryl Ashe and Cammie Pisegna, as told to Charles W. Washington); "No More Pity Parties" (Billie Kenner, as told to Kathy Copps); "Tim's Story" (Tim King, as told to Neil Sturomski); and "Tips to Help Improve Self-Esteem." (KC)

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National Adult Literacy & Learning Disabilities Center's

LINKAGES

Linking Literacy & Learning Disabilities

Summer 1994
Vol. 1, No. 1

From the Director...

I recently attended a national conference with professionals in the field of adult education and literacy. I was amazed at the number of times that the issue of self-esteem came up both in workshops and in individual conversations. It seems that more and more practitioners are seeing how crucial it is to address issues of self-esteem in adult education and literacy programs, especially with students with learning disabilities. Many participants noted that when self-esteem was elevated, students made greater progress in improving reading skills.

The premiere issue of LINKAGES focuses on self-esteem. It was our aim to make the range of contributors as broad as possible, including a professional in learning disabilities, an adult basic educator, a state literacy resource center director, a local literacy provider, and two adult students who tell how they overcame struggles with low self-esteem to confront their literacy difficulties and learning disabilities.

The National ALLD Center, funded by the National Institute for Literacy, hopes that this and future newsletters will serve as LINKAGES for students, literacy providers, and learning disabilities specialists. Our mission is to raise national awareness about the relationship between adult literacy and learning disabilities. We hope that this newsletter will help practitioners, policy makers, and researchers better meet the needs of adults with learning disabilities.

SELF-ESTEEM: ISSUES FOR THE ADULT LEARNER

How Not to Feel Stupid When You Know You're Not: Self-Esteem and Learning Disabilities

by Sally L. Smith

One of the biggest battles we have teaching people with learning disabilities is dealing with negative self-images. Many of them have been teased and taunted all of their lives, and they feel so rotten about themselves that, even when they succeed, they are not comfortable with themselves.

Usually, as early as in kindergarten, children with learning disabilities are smart enough to figure out that their peers are able to recognize letters and play with symbols successfully and they are not. This sense of inadequacy is nailed down by subsequent defeats and failure. Some individuals with learning disabilities have an all-pervasive feeling of not being on the same level as their peers. They may feel that they are "stupid" and "dumb." And they fear others feel the same way about them.

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They are constantly looking for any situation where they could possibly fail and be made fun of. So much of their energy is consumed by fear of failure that the learning disabled often don't have much energy left to tackle their learning disabilities and invent strategies that will help them to learn.

The image we have of ourselves as children often affects how we feel about ourselves as adults. Children who feel overweight often turn into adults who are obsessed with their weight even though they are thin. Similarly, children who feel like failures may turn into adults obsessed with failing — even if they are successful.

There are many ingredients that contribute to success in life that tests do not measure and that traditional teaching most likely does not reward. These include subtle ingredients that have to do with drive and determination, the setting of reachable goals, ingenuity, resourcefulness, and interpersonal skills.

What we find with adults with learning disabilities is that often they have a wealth of untapped potential. To photograph with an unconventional eye, to build a beautiful boat, to compose a sonata, to organize a party, or to ease the last days of someone who is terminally ill — these are the skills that humanize our civilization and make life worth living. People with learning disabilities can realize that they are not stupid, or lazy, or bad, or incompetent, but, rather, that they are intelligent people with a mass of potential. They can begin to prize their uniqueness and feel better about themselves.

To build self-esteem, a person has to know his or her strengths and interests, at the same time knowing what he or she has the most trouble with and what strategies help. As actor/director/producer Henry Winkler told children at the Lab School of Washington, "The feeling of feeling stupid when you are not is terrible. Your person, your personality, your inner song is a lot more important than the speed at which you get things done." When people like themselves, everything seems possible. They can dare to risk a little failure.

Elizabeth Daniels Squire, author, says, "It certainly is more inspiring to think of yourself as a person with a problem you can get around by working a little harder, trying alternatives, and not giving up, than trying to think of yourself as an awkward klutz who is jinxed and has bad luck..." People with learning disabilities must not view themselves as victims of fate. They must see themselves as agents of change and think of their learning disabilities not as problems but as opportunities to problem-solve.

Accomplishing what one wants to do can be done even if it is not done the way everyone else does it. Learning disabilities are simply one of the facts of life — part of the way in which some people operate. Being learning disabled doesn't have to keep a person from chasing dreams. It just means that he or she chases them differently. No matter what we do, we are in charge of ourselves as we chase our dreams. The responsibility for learning and growing rests with us.◆

A little advice to the learning disabled:

- **Recognize your strengths and weaknesses;**
- **Know what accommodations you need;**
- **Invent your own strategies; and**
- **Be able to ask for help when you need it.**

Sally L. Smith *is professor of education in charge of the graduate program in Special Education: Learning Disabilities at the American University in Washington, D.C., and founder and director of the Lab School of Washington. She is the author of Succeeding Against the Odds: Strategies and Insights from the Learning Disabled.*

Breaking the Low Self-Esteem Cycle

by Judy-Arin Krupp

Conjure up the feelings that accompany low self-esteem by thinking about some arena of life in which you repeatedly fail or receive negative feedback. Perhaps others taunt and tease you about your inabilities. Maybe you never seem to connect a bat with a ball, or repeatedly have nonproductive interactions with a significant person in your life. Such events diminish confidence. They lead to avoidance as well as depression and fear of failure.

Individuals with reading difficulties often experience similar negative feelings. They lack esteem as readers and learners and often do not prize themselves as individuals. No wonder many adults with low literacy skills have established an elaborate, self-protective system in hopes that others will not perceive their inabilities!

What literacy programs can and must do is establish a climate in which adult learners can develop the confidence in their own potential that underlies self-esteem.

What is self-esteem? Self-esteem means how you feel about yourself. A person who has difficulty reading may derive high self-esteem from successful compensating strategies. For example, a person with reading difficulties may pride himself on being such a good actor that others don't realize he can't read.

Self-esteem creates self-image, the picture we have of ourselves. We work hard in life to reinforce our self-image. The person in our example might claim to have forgotten the printed materials for a meeting so someone else will read the salient points, or he might cough when asked to read so some other person at the meeting will read. But if he pictures himself as an incompetent reader and student, then he may do things in life that increase his feelings of ineptitude. He may not enter a literacy program. He may not even try to read. At some point, however, the pain of faking it may become greater than the pain of learning to read. When that happens, the person may take the risk of joining a literacy program.

Entering a literacy program requires modifying one's self-image — no easy task. People with high self-esteem take risks more easily than those with low self-esteem. Most people who have reading problems do not esteem themselves as readers. They take a huge risk when they decide to learn to read. What do these adults give up when they enter a literacy program? They relinquish the belief that they can't read. They give up the face-saving techniques they have lived with for years. They give up pretending in order to maintain a sense of self. They give up false security. In exchange for letting go of these self-protective defenses and for risk-taking, they rediscover capacities previously deemed unavailable. The literacy program provides an opportunity to gain a clearer self-concept and positive self-esteem.

Notice the word "opportunity" in the previous sentence. No one can build the self-esteem of another. What literacy programs can and must do is establish a climate in which adult learners can develop the confidence in their own potential that underlies self-esteem. Such environments encourage learners to: make choices and hold them responsible for the results of their decisions; set clearly defined limits and achievable goals; and focus on strengths while reframing negative thoughts. Such an atmosphere optimizes the chances that adult learners will feel good about themselves while learning to read. As they begin to feel competent as readers, their sense of self-esteem escalates. As esteem increases, their chances of achieving go up.

As confidence and competence develop, adults experience positive feelings about self, and they

gain a new picture of themselves and of life. It is an affirmative image that enhances their quality of existence.◆

Judy-Arin Krupp *is a nationally and internationally known consultant who helps individuals understand themselves and others in order to increase productivity and quality of life. She is the author of Adult Development and The Adult Learner.*

Stacking the Deck: Four Aces of Self-Esteem

by Linda Andresen

In the game of solitaire, a player strives to find the aces in each suit of cards upon which to place the remaining cards of that suit in ascending order. A solid approach to training practitioners in adult education is similar to the principles of solitaire in that we have identified four "aces" upon which training is based: **awareness**, **assessment**, **accommodation**, and **advocacy**.

The first ace in training is **awareness**. Every adult literacy provider, administrator, teacher, and tutor must have a full understanding of learning differences. We must be aware that, many times before students can even begin to move toward their academic goals, we must first assist them in gaining confidence and building self-esteem. Practitioners must provide the students with positive learning experiences; perhaps the first positive experiences they have ever had. Many students come to adult education programs as casualties of life's circumstances: confused, full of self- doubt, and ostracized by others who don't understand them. It is essential to provide an atmosphere in which wounds can heal and students can move with confidence toward the future.

Given a supportive environment, over time the student feels more comfortable with disclosing past painful learning experiences and begins to lose some of the fear of failure. As practitioners show that they have faith in students, the students will begin to have more faith in themselves, and self-esteem will grow.

The next ace is **assessment**. Practitioners have to be trained to use effective assessment techniques such as personal interviews, observations, check-lists, and in-depth questionnaires. Students are inclined to begin to trust someone who shows genuine interest in knowing more about them: their past struggles, strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles and helps them acquire greater self-esteem. As students reach a new understanding of how they can best learn by building upon their strengths, their feelings of self-esteem elevates.

The third ace is **accommodation**. Depending upon the results of the assessment, the practitioner helps each student set realistic goals and suggests different accommodations to help reach these goals. Accommodations help the students put some type of method to the madness they have been experiencing throughout their lives. The student should implement accommodations at home, in the community, and at work. As students discover more about how they can learn best, successes begin to grow. As success grows, so does self-esteem.

The final ace is to get students to **advocate** for themselves. As self-advocates, students inform others of the types of accommodations they need to complete a task. This is one of the most difficult steps for a person with a learning disability to take. Self advocacy involves: admitting to having a learning disability; speaking for yourself; taking the risk of being ridiculed or rejected; and willingly confronting difficult situations.

When students practice self-advocacy, they are sending out several messages. One message is that they care enough about a task to inform people of the types of accommodations they will need to complete it. Another message is that they are willing to trust someone to handle the information that they shared about themselves in a mature

manner. The most important message is that the students care enough about themselves to inform others of what they know works best for them.

When literacy providers help students become **aware** of how they learn best, **assess** their strengths and weaknesses, find **accommodations** for their learning needs, and begin **self-advocacy**, then the deck is stacked for their future success. ❖

Linda Andresen *is the Adult Basic Education Development Coordinator at Regional Education Service Agency III and the Director of the West Virginia Center for Adult Literacy and Learning.*

Anger and Frustration: Manifestations of Low Self-Esteem

by Cheryl Ashe and Cammie Pisegna as told to Charles W. Washington

Low self-esteem has many different manifestations. Withdrawal, depression, and lack of self-confidence are all symptoms of low self-esteem. At the Literacy Program in St. Joseph County, many of the adult students express anger and frustration, because they do not complete certain tasks easily or efficiently. When these feelings are turned inward, they reinforce feelings of low self-esteem.

At the Literacy Program, sponsored by the St. Joseph County Public Library and the Literacy Council of St. Joseph, we help students deal with the anger and frustration caused by their reading difficulties by introducing them to different learning styles and in some cases, by educating them about learning disabilities.

...many of the adult students express anger and frustration because they do not complete certain tasks easily or efficiently. When these feelings are turned inward, they reinforce feelings of low self-esteem.

The first phase of the Literacy Program is an extensive interviewing session. We ask the students about their learning experiences and difficulties so we can get a sense of the reading level and the types of learning styles that may be effective. The interviews are usually educational as well as liberating for the students. They discover that there are different learning styles that may help them learn. The students also begin to understand that it is not their fault that they could not learn the way others around them could.

With this knowledge, many of the students begin to redirect the self-contained anger and frustration they experienced as a result of their learning differences. They look back over their educational experience and question why no one explained to them that they were not to blame for their repeated academic failures. We try to help students understand, that similar to how a person who is blind may need braille, raised lettering, or taped books to read, they, too, may need alternative methods to learn to read because of their learning disabilities.

As they deal with their anger and frustration, many of our students seem to develop a level of enthusiasm about the challenge of learning to read. They begin to see their reading difficulties as a problem that can be solved instead of a secret that must be hidden. We have some students who take their homework with them to work and spread it out on the lunch table. Some of our students carry a bag with the Literacy Program's emblem on it. One student, on his way to a work site, had a truckload of his co-workers drop him off at the library so he could explain why he would be missing a tutoring session.

What may help these students deal with their reading difficulties with such enthusiasm is the tone we try to set at the Literacy Program. We refer to the adults in our program as students. We feel that terms like "client" and "learner" suggest that they are different than other people in the school system.

We stress that there is not much difference between students studying to get doctoral degrees and students learning the alphabet. Regardless of the subject matter, they both have to study.

As administrators, we make an effort to get to know the students. We try to let them know that they are treasured individuals who are worthy of our attention and respect. We make a point of knowing each of them by name and engaging in social interactions with them.

Our tutors are also important factors in our program. They relay the message that each student is important and worthy of the time and energy spent with them. When some students slack off, often it is the tutor who encourages them to continue.

It is important to provide the opportunity for the students to be aware of their accomplishments. Every month the tutors write a report of student progress. We then report successes in a newsletter. Some of the stories have even been covered in the local newspaper. We have an annual awards ceremony where a person with reading difficulties speaks about his experiences. All of the students are given certificates for the time completed. Even minimal successes are rewarded. We let the students know that all victories should be celebrated.

Low self-esteem is common among many adult literacy students. Even though students are not wallowing in self-pity, the anger and frustration they have as a result of blaming themselves for their reading difficulties may have a negative effect on their self-image. These students do not need to feel sorry for themselves, nor do they need pity from literacy providers. What they do need is to be educated about their learning differences. These students also need to experience how it feels to know that someone cares about them. When students see that others care about them, they are inclined to care more about themselves.◆

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No More Pity Parties

by Billie Kenner, as told to Kathy Copps

When my cousin was twelve years old, she wanted a boyfriend. When my best friend was twelve years old, she wanted a new dress. When I was twelve years old, I wanted to die.

My desire to end my life at such an early age stemmed from the frustration and confusion I experienced because of what I know now is a learning disability. When I was growing up I didn't catch on to things as quickly as other kids my age. I could barely read, and I couldn't do simple math functions. I turned to the teachers, and they couldn't help me. I turned to my family, and they couldn't help me. I looked to myself, and I couldn't help myself.

At home, nobody understood what was going on with me. I am sure my family sensed that there was something wrong with me, but they just assumed it was laziness. I would hear them whisper things about how simple I was or how stupid I was. I knew I wasn't stupid or lazy, but I didn't know what the problem was.

The schools weren't helpful at all in dealing with my learning difficulties. I was 15 years old in the seventh grade and just didn't fit in. I remember once sitting on the floor and crying for hours because I couldn't read.

All my feelings and frustrations finally reached a point where I couldn't deal with them anymore, and I ran away from home and dropped out of school in the eighth grade. I was 16 but only able to read things like street signs and a few words I had memorized.

I lived in the streets for a while. Later I lived with friends or relatives. There weren't many job opportunities for me because of my lack of training and lack of education.

I was never afraid of work. I picked up any job that was a challenge and developed my own accommodations when I could. I wasn't afraid to try anything, but if I thought people would find out that I couldn't read I would leave.

When I was 29 years old, I admitted to someone for the first time in my life that I could not read. The director of a gospel choir I was singing in openly asked if I had a problem with reading the song book. I admitted my difficulties with reading, and he readily took on the challenges of teaching me. He was perceptive enough to choose reading materials that interested me. The more I read, the better I felt about myself.

This has all been a slow process that began later in my life than for most people, but the seed is now planted and I know I will continue to grow.

My lifeline to learning was cut when my choir director got married and relocated. I was reading at about a third grade level by this time, and it would be a while before I made any more progress.

I was working as a waitress at a club and through sheer wit managed to keep that job for about ten years. I was always afraid from the day that I applied for the job that someone would find out that I couldn't read or write. I was able to write down orders because I had memorized the first three letters of each drink and was then able to match the three letters to the posted signs and prices over the bar. Receiving money and counting change were nightmares which left me feeling dumb and often taken advantage of by a few of the customers. I devised strategies for managing the bills, such as having the customers count out the bill, or if the bill was over $20 I would take it to the register and have the cashier make change which he would count out and I would count back to the customers. Most of the customers were repeat customers and generally very nice, but always there was the anxiety of being found out and embarrassed by my learning problems.

After working for over 10 years as a waitress, I decided I wanted something more. I thought I would like working in a hospital so I applied to the University of the District of Columbia for training as a Nursing Assistant. I lied about having a GED and was accepted into the program. Somehow, I managed to get through the program with Bs and Cs. I did the required reading by reading each word letter by letter. I joined study groups and encouraged others to read things I couldn't figure out, and I would follow intently as the text was read. I made flash cards, I wrote and repeated words hundreds of times until I could remember them, and I did what I had to do to learn what I was supposed to learn. I was able to keep my reading problem a secret, even from my study group.

I passed the program but my problems followed me to my job assignments. I was great with the patients and the hands-on nursing duties. It was the little things I couldn't do, such as reading schedules and charts and writing down patient information (blood pressure, pulse, temperature). I had problems with numbers. I couldn't read the schedule so I was late for work and I took the wrong days off. I had constant feelings of inadequacy and incompetency. I was eventually fired because all of my little mistakes added up and I couldn't seem to take oral directions or sequence the tasks I was asked to do.

After I was fired, I became angry. I cried for two days. I was pitiful. When I finally got myself together, I told myself, "No more pity parties!" I

decided that my inability to read would not make me lose another job. I knew I needed help, so I started calling people to find out how I could get help. I relied heavily on the telephone information service because I couldn't read the telephone book. I would call and say, "Who do you call when you get fired from your job because you can't read?" Eventually I contacted a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor who arranged for me to get a psychological evaluation. When the evaluation was complete, I was assigned a therapist who felt I needed to deal with my problems of self-esteem as well as my literacy issues.

My Vocational Rehabilitation counselor also arranged for me to have an educational evaluation to determine if I had a learning disability. It was one of the happiest moments of my life when the tester informed me that I was normal and that I could learn. This wonderful news put an end to so much anxiety and frustration that I was experiencing. I began to feel good about myself.

When I started taking classes in a program for adults with learning disabilities, I had a difficult time opening up to the teachers and therapists. I had a hard time switching classes and getting used to two teachers in one night. I was making progress at this time, but I still had a lot of painful memories from my past to deal with. I had to heal my emotional scars so I could move on with my life.

And that's what I did and am still doing. Now, I can honestly say I feel good about myself. I am still attending classes. I have improved my reading and comprehension skills tremendously. This has all been a slow process that began later in my life than for most people, but the seed is now planted and I know I will continue to grow.

I was 40 years old when I was diagnosed as having learning disabilities. Through my own tenacity and determination, I found out where I needed to go to get help. But now I wonder about those who are suffering some of the same pains that I have suffered and who can't find it within themselves to seek the help that they need. I think about the poor who can't afford to be tested. I think about the children with learning disabilities who are being abused and are beginning to believe the things said about them because they can't read.

Just as I was determined to help myself, I am determined to help those who may not know how to help themselves. I will use that same self-love and determination to stay motivated to study to get my GED so I can become a teaching assistant.◆

Tim's Story

by Tim King, as told to Neil Sturomski

"There is not a child who we can't teach," the school principal told my mother. This statement left my mother frustrated and angry because I was not doing well in school. And it made me feel bad about myself as I thought about how I couldn't catch on to school work like my classmates in the first and second grades. I thought about how I repeated the third grade. I thought about how I was having problems keeping up in the fourth grade. I felt like I was a child who couldn't be taught.

While in the fourth grade I was diagnosed as having a learning disability. I started to attend special education classes to work on reading and spelling skills, but I still felt like a child who couldn't be taught. I had a hard time in public schools because I felt like I was not normal. I had to leave my classroom to attend special education classes and I still wasn't doing well in the regular class. I just couldn't keep up.

By the time I was in junior high school, my learning disabilities really made me feel like I was an outcast. I didn't have many friends. I had four special education classes that I would try to slip in and out of without other kids seeing me. The teachers were pretty good, but they directed most of their attention to students with behavior

problems. I wasn't really into school because it made me feel bad about myself.

When I was in the seventh grade I went through one of the most humiliating experiences in school. The teacher assigned each of us a part to read in a play while being recorded on a tape recorder. When my part in the play came up, I couldn't read my lines. The teacher tried to help me sound out words. I felt really bad because the guy taping the play had to keep stopping the recorder. To add to my embarrassment, a girl I had a crush on was in the class.

I had never thought of telling any of my employers about my learning disabilities. I tried to hide the fact that I had learning disabilities.

It became obvious that I wasn't getting the kind of help I needed in the public school system. My mother looked into other types of education. She learned about the Lab School of Washington, a private school that deals with students with learning disabilities. She felt that the public school system should pay for my tuition since they couldn't provide the type of help that I needed. The public school system was a bit reluctant, but they agreed to pay after my mother threatened a law suit. I enrolled at the Lab School, and I studied there for two years.

I made my biggest improvements while I was at the Lab School. The teachers take you back to square one. I got a chance to really work on the fundamentals at a slower pace and with a lot more attention from the teachers. I also felt a lot better about myself because I was in a classroom where everybody was like me. We all had learning disabilities. I began to like school because I was learning things.

At that time, the Lab School only went up to the ninth grade, so I had to return to the public school system for the tenth grade. While in high school I was on the wrestling and football teams. I liked competing with other students because I felt like I was their equal on the wrestling mat or on the football field. I felt good because I could do the same things that these kids could do.

While in high school I tried to lead a double life. I had special education classes that were apart from the regular classes, and I didn't want any of the other athletes to see me going in and out of these classes. I would bolt out of these classes when the bell rang for dismissal and blend in with the other students. I know some of the other athletes knew I had special education classes but they didn't say anything about it. I think some of the students in the special education classes kind of looked up to me as somebody with a learning disability who did things that the regular students could do.

I held several part-time jobs throughout high school. I worked as a cook, a stock clerk, and a furniture deliverer. After graduating from high school, I held on to the job delivering furniture for a while. After I left the job delivering furniture, I got a job delivering medical supplies. After that I started work as a shop man with a painting company. I felt that all of these jobs were dead end jobs.

I found that in the jobs where I could advance, I would have to do a lot of paper work. I would get very confused with the paper work and fall behind. I was promoted to supervisor at a furniture store and I fell so far behind with my paper work that they hired somebody to help me. I appreciated the additional help as well as how it was handled. My boss didn't make a big deal out of it. One day a woman just walked into my office and said, "Tim, I was told to help you get caught up on your paper work." When she was transferred to another position, I fell behind in my paper work again.

I had never thought of telling any of my employers about my learning disabilities. I didn't know how they would handle it. So, like I did in high school, I tried to hide the fact that I had learning disabilities.

I realized that I was not happy with my life. I applied for a job as a customer service representative with a lawn company. I wrote on the application that I had learning disabilities. During my second interview I told the vice president of the company that I had learning disabilities. The company was impressed by me telling them about my learning disabilities, and I was hired.

I had not done much reading since I graduated from high school. I felt a need for more structured learning. I wanted to pick up some more reading skills and improve my reading level. It was very frustrating to want to read faster but having to read over things two or three times for comprehension. So, I decided to go back to school.

I enrolled in the Night School at the Lab School of Washington. The Night School is a program at the Lab School that is for adults with learning disabilities. Going back to school made me feel better about myself. I felt very comfortable in this setting because, here, we were all in the same boat. I came to realize that I was not there to prove anything to anybody else, I was there to better myself.

Now that I understand and can better accept that I have learning disabilities, I have a whole new attitude about my life. As for my future, I would really like a job that will allow me to use more of my mind and less of my body.❖

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Tips to Help Improve Self-Esteem

Practitioners who want to help adult students improve their self-esteem may find some of the following suggestions helpful:

- Be patient and understanding;
- Be non-judgmental;
- Help students set realistic goals according to their capabilities;
- Offer praise and positive reinforcement regularly;
- Maintain a sense of humor and share it;
- Be an alert listener;
- Treat students with respect;
- Be sure that non-verbal messages reflect a positive and supportive attitude;
- Accept that a lesson may not always go the way you planned;
- Try to make the content of a lesson relevant to the student's real life situations;
- Become accustomed to working with different learning styles;
- Encourage self-reliance. Let the student participate in making decisions.

Source: Kramer, P. (1990). *The dynamics of relationships.* Silver Spring, MD:=Equal Partners.

Selected Readings

To learn more about how self-esteem effects adult students, contact your local library for the following publications. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive and is not an endorsement of any publisher or any materials. Whenever possible, we have included ordering information in case the publication is not available in your area.

Gerber, P.J. & Ginsberg, R.J. (1990). *Identifying alterable patterns of success in highly successful adults with learning disabilities.* Richmond, VA: Richmond School Education.

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The Center is a national resource for information on learning disabilities and their impact on the provision of literacy services. We encourage your inquiries and will either directly provide you with information or refer you to an appropriate resource.

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